

REMARKS

Please reconsider the present application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering the present application.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-14 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1, 11, and 12 are independent. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from Claim 1. By way of this Reply, Claim 12 has been canceled.

Claim Amendments

Claim 12 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing Claims 1-10 and 13-14.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 11

Claim 11 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,818,555 (“Yokoyama”). For the reasons set forth below, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Previously presented Claim 11 recites a diffusion sheet. The diffusion sheet includes: plural diffusion patterns formed on a light-incident surface, the light-incident surface being the bottom surface of the diffusion sheet, wherein each of the diffusion patterns has, in at least one section thereof, a first inclined surface and a second inclined surface, the first inclined surface being *curved* and the second inclined surface being oppositely inclined to the first

inclined surface, wherein incident light hitting the first inclined surface is diffused by the first inclined surface and emitted from the top surface of the diffusion sheet.

Yokayama discloses a surface light source device having a light conducting member, a light source, and a light diffusing member. Yokayama does not teach at least the first inclined surface being curved. In the instant Office Action, the Examiner states that Figures 12-15 of Yokayama teach a first inclined surface being curved. Applicant respectfully disagrees. Referring to Figures 12-15 of Yokayama, the first inclined surface is *not* curved. In fact, the first inclined surface is flat and joins the second inclined surface at a camber. The fact that the first inclined surface in Yokayama is flat is also evident in Figures 8, 17, 20-21, and 23-25. The disclosure of Yokayama is completely silent about the first inclined surface being curved.

In contrast, the first inclined surface of the present invention being curved as required by Claim 11 of the present application is clearly illustrated in, for example, Figs. 12, 13A, 13B, 14A, 14B, and 16C, wherein the first inclined surface 29 is shown to be curved. Advantages due to such an inventive feature include at least that the light is diffused with little loss. This is clearly explained in, for example, paragraph [0072] of the Specification, wherein it is stated that “when the main inclined plane 29 is flat as shown in Fig. 16A, the light L emitted from the top surface of the optical film 23 is aligned to be parallel, but when the main inclined plane 29 is curved, the light L emitted from the top surface of the optical film 23 spreads within a predetermined range”.

In view of the above, Yokayama fails to show or suggest the present invention as recited in Claim 11 of the present application. Thus, Claim 11 of the present application is patentable over Yokayama for at least the reasons set forth above. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 12

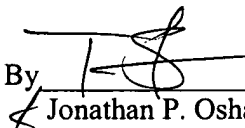
Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Cowan *et al.* (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. 2002/0141065). Claim 12 has been canceled by way of this Reply, thus this rejection is moot.

Conclusion

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 15115/091001).

Dated: February 6, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments

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